

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
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The Chair opens the meeting

- Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room
- **Selectboard Members present:** Christopher Boutwell arrived at 6:17 PM. Michael Nelson and Richard Kuklewicz were absent.
- **Finance Committee members present:** Michael Naughton, Jen Audley, Fred Bowman, Chris Menegoni, Richard Widmer and John Hanold. Greg Garrison was absent.
- **Others present:** Town Administrator Steve Ellis, Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen, CIC member Joshua Lively, and WPCF Superintendent Robert McDonald. The Finance Committee Chair announced that the meeting is being recorded by MCCI and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting. No one else was recording the meeting.

Minutes –

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of March 14, 2018.

Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Recommend Revised Schedules I and II

Schedule I was revised to reduce the request for Board of Assessor stipends from \$1,800 to the recommended amount of \$1,500. Schedule II had two revisions. The first reduced the request for the Emergency Management Director stipend from \$5,600 to the recommended amount of \$5,490. The second revision added the position of Airport Intern with a range of \$11.00-\$12.50 per hour for Fiscal Year 2019.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend the revised Schedule I, Wages for Elected Officials and Schedule II, Wages for Appointed Officials.

Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

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Capital Improvements Committee (CIC) Report

The CIC reviewed their report (attached at the end of these minutes). The only change from their preliminary report was a decrease from \$190,000 to \$150,000 in the request and recommendation for Colle renovations based on new information. The goal of a 20 year plan for repair and maintenance of all town buildings is still being pursued. Mr. Naughton asked that this be made a priority, and that a progress report be presented this summer.

Preliminary budget recommendations for capital items, including funding

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$30,000 for the COA front entry replacement, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$100,000 for the DPW Discretionary Account, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$72,000 for Montague's share of the GMRSD Building Management System upgrades at the Great Falls Middle School and Turners Falls High School, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$30,000 for the Sheffield Intercom System, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

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Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$25,000 for the Hillcrest Intercom System, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

WPCF Superintendent McDonald is still waiting to see if Montague will be receiving the \$150,000 grant for the WPCF solar array project. If the grant is not received, the savings will not begin to accrue until after 7 years instead of the expected 5 years. The state has an incentive plan which will provide payments of between \$31,000 and \$50,000 per year for 20 years. Mr. McDonald also expects annual energy savings of \$18,000-\$31,000 per year for a total savings of between \$50,000 and \$ 80,000. This would be offset by annual debt service, which depending on the length of the loan, would range from \$85,000 per year for 5 years and \$26,000 per year for 20 years. There will also be annual maintenance costs of about \$5,000.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$521,000 for the WPCF solar array, to be funded from Sewer Borrowing.

Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$25,000 for the replacement of control panels and alarms at the Denton Street and Montague Center pump stations, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$150,000 for repairs to windows and masonry of the Colle building, to be funded from Colle Receipts Reserved for Appropriation.

Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

The CIC was commended for their report.

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Mr. Menegoni asked about the projects that the libraries had lined up. The roofing work has been done. We're waiting to see if there will be more Green Communities funds available towards the air exchanger. The architectural study leading to a detailed list of needs has been postponed while the Library Director has been forced to allocate her time to higher priorities, but it's still planned.

Mr. Menegoni left at 7:38 PM.

Preliminary budget recommendations for remaining non-capital items

Police Department: The currently proposed budget includes an additional School Resource Officer (SRO), but does not include any amounts that might result from union contract settlements or any changes related to hiring a new chief. Mr. Ellis noted that the Board of Selectmen is taking the time to consider the appropriateness of having a civil service chief as well as the best approach to fill the position, and information is being gathered for their consideration. Because the path and timing of hiring a new police chief is uncertain at this point, it is more prudent to make this a thoughtful and deliberate process. There may be a later appropriation to supplement the Fiscal Year 2019 police budget after the annual town meeting, when the hiring process has been determined and finalized. Mr. Naughton suggested that, as part of the process of replacing the Chief of Police, that the Selectmen reconsider the need for the Lieutenant position as the person recommending that position is no longer chief. Mr. Ellis said that the Selectmen have not taken a position on re-organizing the police department staff. Ms. Audley asked what Mr. Hanold's concerns were regarding the School Resource Officer. Mr. Hanold is concerned both with the prioritization of the SRO above teaching staff as well as the financial impact to Montague. Ms. Audley noted the Gill Selectboard's negative response to the position, including concerns for future funding.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$1,590,107 for the Police Department budget.

Vote: 4 In Favor 1 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$19,257 for the Animal Control budget.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

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Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$2,211,404 for the Employee Benefits budget.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

The FCTS operating assessment is \$951,505 and the proposed capital assessment is \$22,833, which it includes a 4% cushion above the estimated debt cost, FCTS Business Manager Russ Kaubris stated it was up to the town to determine whether we want to add any additional cushion. Any appropriation not spent would be returned to Free Cash. Additionally, the current budget file assumes that the entire FCTS Stabilization Fund will be used to offset the increased assessment. This will leave nothing to offset next year's assessment, which is also expected to be significant. Mr. Naughton proposed using 53,465 of the FCTS Stabilization Fund towards the Fiscal Year 2019 assessment.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$974,338 for the total FCTS assessment, including the operating assessment of \$951,505 plus \$22,833 for the capital assessment, to be funded with \$53,465 from the FCTS Stabilization Fund and \$920,873 from Taxation.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

The town's financial policies recommend two appropriations to the Town General Stabilization Fund. These are \$54,216 as the annual appropriation from taxation and \$67,510 to meet the minimum balance, for a total of \$121,726.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$121,726 for the Town General Stabilization Fund, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

The town's financial policies recommend an annual appropriation from taxation of \$36,144. Additionally, the Finance Committee recommended allocating \$40,150 of the expected Kearsarge lease revenue to this fund, for a total of \$76,294.

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Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$76,294 for the Town Capital Stabilization Fund, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

A formula error lead to the wrong recommendation for the Board of Assessors Budget last week. \$172,381 was recommended, but the amount should be \$172,981.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$172,981 for the Board of Assessors budget.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Topics not anticipated within in the 48 hour posting requirements

Mr. Widmer shared a pie chart allocating the operating budget to different categories with the intent of showing the debt share of the total budget. Mr. Widmer wants the town to work together to find the right price for the new DPW facility, as he doesn't think everyone in town should have to pay the price of a cup of copy every day for the current proposed debt. Mr. Widmer is also concerned that the comparable communities used in the committee report are all much wealthier than Montague.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM

List of Documents and Exhibits:

- Minutes of March 14, 2017
- Final Schedules I and II
- CIC report

Next Meeting Dates:

March 28, 2018 Final budget recommendations and funding sources

April 4, 2018 Draft FC Report

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April 11, 2018	Revise FC Report
April 18, 2018	final re-votes, if required, approve FC Report
EOY Recap	How beneficial/useful were the department narratives?

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SCHEDULE I

Elected Officials

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>FY18 BUDGET</u>	<u>FY19 REQUEST</u>	<u>FY19 RECOMMEND</u>
MODERATOR	350	350	350
BOARD OF SELECTMEN			
Chairman	2,040	2,040	2,040
Second/Third Members	2,040	2,040	2,040
BOARD OF ASSESSOR			
Chairman	1,500	1,500	1,500
Second/Third Members	1,500	1,500	1,500
TREASURER/COLLECTOR *G-3	0	61,243*	61,243
TOWN CLERK *G-9, **G-10	69,988*	71,388**	71,388
BOARD OF REGISTRARS			
Town Clerk	800	800	800
TREE WARDEN	1,500	1,500	1,500
BOARD OF HEALTH			
Chairman	1,500	1,500	1,500
Second/Third Members	1,500	1,500	1,500

Finance Committee recommends Voted 7-0
 Selectmen recommend Voted 3-0

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**SCHEDULE II
 Appointed Officials**

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>FY18 BUDGET</u>	<u>FY19 REQUEST</u>	<u>FY19 RECOMMEND</u>
<u>ANNUAL STIPENDS</u>			
BOARD OF REGISTRARS (3)	500	500	500
EMERGENCY MGMT DIRECTOR	5,490	5,490	5,490
ANIMAL INSPECTOR	1,500	1,500	1,500
BARN INSPECTOR	1,000	1,000	1,000
<u>ANNUAL STIPENDS</u>			
IT ADMINISTRATOR	2,000	2,000	2,000
FOREST WARDEN	1,631	1,631	1,631
<u>RATES PER INSPECTION</u>			
ASST. BUILDING INSPECTOR	27.50	27.50	27.50
GAS INSPECTOR	27.50	27.50	27.50
PLUMBING INSPECTOR	27.50	27.50	27.50
ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR	27.50	27.50	27.50
<u>HOURLY RATES</u>			
EXTRA CLERICAL	<u>10.00-12.00</u>	<u>11.00-12.00</u>	<u>11.00-12.00</u>
ELECTION WORKERS	10.00-13.00	11.00-13.00	11.00-13.00
SUMMER HIGHWAY	10.00-13.00	11.00-13.00	11.00-13.00
SNOW PLOW DRIVERS	15.00-25.00	15.00-25.00	15.00-25.00
PART TIME POLICE OFFICERS	14.50-19.00	17.00-19.00	17.00-19.00
PART TIME DISPATCHERS	17.00-19.00	17.00-19.00	17.00-19.00
PARKS & RECREATION	11.00-20.00	11.00-20.00	11.00-20.00
AIRPORT INTERN		11.00-12.50	11.00-12.50

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NON-UNION EMPLOYEES NOT SHOWN ABOVE

	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Range FY2018</u>		<u>Range FY2019</u>	
		Start	End	Start	End
<u>SALARIED</u>					
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	J	87,893	108,169	89,651	110,332
TOWN ACCOUNTANT	G	57,148	69,988	58,291	71,388
TREASURER/TAX COLLECTOR	G	57,148	69,988	58,291	71,388
CHIEF OF POLICE	I	79,903	98,334	81,501	100,301
DPW SUPERINTENDENT	H	71,567	88,084	74,094	91,183
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH	G	57,148	69,988	58,291	71,388
LIBRARY DIRECTOR	G	57,148	69,988	58,291	71,388
WPCF SUPERINTENDENT	H	72,641	89,395	74,094	91,183
<u>HOURLY</u>					
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	E	21.24	26.15	21.66	26.67
POLICE LIEUTENANT	G+8.5%	35.80	38.75	36.51	39.52
POLICE CUSTODIAN	A	14.24	17.52	14.52	17.54

Informational Only: Fiscal Year 2019 budgeted wages with 2.0% COLA

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	110,332	DPW SUPERINTENDENT	91,183
TOWN ACCOUNTANT	71,388	DIRECTOR OF HEALTH	71,388
TREAS/TAX COLLECTOR	61,243	LIBRARY DIRECTOR	67,271
CHIEF OF POLICE*	113,418	WPCF SUPERINTENDENT	91,183
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	26.67	POLICE LIEUTENANT	37.99
POLICE CUSTODIAN	16.01		

*includes add'l 20% educational incentive pay

Selectmen recommend Voted 3-0
 Finance Committee recommends Voted 7-0

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Capital Improvements Committee

FY18 Report to the Finance Committee

DRAFT -- Rev. March 19, 2018

Effective July 1, 2018, the Capital Improvements Committee (CIC) became a five-member board—reduced from its previous six members—and welcomed in two new members with construction and renovation expertise. In September, the CIC adopted a new framework to guide the scheduling of its work in FY18 and in future budget cycles. The committee also developed and implemented a new Capital Article request form to help Department Heads understand what information the CIC needs in order to evaluate a proposed special article request. The new form streamlines the CIC’s preliminary information gathering process and focuses on the reasoning and relative urgency behind each request.

In addition to clarifying and enhancing committee processes, its members also adopted a preliminary 20-year capital plan that it will continue to refine in FY19 and took time to tour several town facilities including the Millers Falls and Montague Center libraries, the Water Pollution Control Facility, the Department of Public Works Facility at 500 Avenue A, the Hillcrest School, the Sheffield School/Administration Building, and the Town Hall annex and nearby metal “Butler building.” All of these visits were quite comprehensive and conducted in an effort to achieve a clearer understanding of needs as related to capital expenses.

Following receipt of capital project submissions in early January, the CIC met eight times to understand and evaluate departments’ presentations related to ten projects proposed for inclusion in the fiscal year 2019 (FY 19) Montague town budget. It considered these in light of a \$308,548 “pay as you go” (PAYGO) budget set aside in the annual budget, as presented by the Montague Finance Committee. In addition, the committee heard further presentation related to a major capital building project – a proposed Department of Public Works (DPW) Facility that would be funded through debt exclusion.

The committee enjoyed the very thoughtful and compelling presentations it received, which underscored the need to make strategic investments in ongoing capital equipment purchases and repairs, as well as the continued debate regarding larger capital building projects, with the proposed new DPW facility at the top of that list, followed by library and senior center and WPCF, all of which are anticipated to require renovation or replacement at some future point in time.

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Following is a brief description of all items considered by the CIC during these eight meetings, including votes taken relative to whether to recommend them to the Finance Committee.

Major Building Project

New Department of Public Works Facility (\$11,146,000, debt exclusion expected)

Members of the CIC enjoyed a briefing and discussion of the proposed new DPW facility in Fall 2017 and again in February 2018. Some members also attended public forums by the DPW facility planning committee. The CIC closely examined the options available to the town as pertaining to the future of DPW operations in regards to the need for a safe and modern structure. The current building at 500 Avenue A is perhaps decades beyond its serviceable lifespan and even with a complete renovation it would still fail to meet the needs of the DPW in the twenty first century. Beyond a practical use standpoint there are obvious safety issues with the building that result in dangerous working conditions along with the risk for a complete shutdown of the building by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Vote: Mr Obear moves the following statement and recommendation: **the CIC believes the existing DPW facility is in need of immediate replacement, that a new building is the most appropriate approach**, that the site selected and proposed for the proposed project is ideal, and that the characteristics of the facility as proposed are appropriate to the Town’s needs, for the foreseeable future, and recommends the Finance Committee and Select Board advances it for consideration by Special Town Meeting. Mr. Lively seconds. Committee votes to 3-0, with Mr. Ellis, as Town Administrator, abstaining but supportive.

Capital Improvements Articles

Summary of Submissions and Recommendations

FY19 Capital Article Submissions and Recommendations

Expected Source

Department	Project	Cost	Recommend	PAYGO	Borrowing	Reserves
COA	COA Front Stairs/Porch	\$ 30,000	\$27,816	\$27,816		
DPW	Discretionary Budget	\$ 100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000		
DPW	Town Hall Annex Roof	\$ 85,000				
GMRDS	Upgrade BMA	\$ 72,000	\$72,000	\$72,000		
GMRDS	Admin Bldg Elevator Study	\$ 100,000				
GMRDS	Sheffield InterCom	\$ 30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000		

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Department	Project	Cost	Recommend	PAYGO	Borrowing	Reserves
WPCF	WPCF Solar Array*	\$ 521,000	\$371,000		\$371,000	
WPCF	Control Panel and Alarm Repair	\$ 25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000		
BOS	Colle Building Renovation	\$ 190,000	\$190,000			\$190,000
Totals		\$ 1,178,000	840,816	\$ 279,816	\$ 371,000	190,000
PAYGO			PAYGO			
Target	\$308,548		Balance	\$28,732		

*Borrowing reflects assumption of \$150,000 in grant funding

**The Colle Reserve Fund has a balance of \$346,000. A 50% matching grant is being submitted to Mass Historic.

The committee considered ten Capital Articles, which include items with an expected life of five or more years and a cost of \$25,000 or more. While all of the proposed projects have strong rationale, the committee prioritized funding of eight in the present budget cycle.

- ***Council on Aging: Building Front Entry Replacement***

This project includes replacement of the front entry of the COA building, which is currently out of code and hazardous. Project will include new foundation piers, framework, and stairs, as well as installing an adequate roof over the landing. This roof will be built so as to maintain reasonable visibility of the Turners Falls Athletic Club logo from across the street, though closer views will be obscured. Finish materials comprised of composite and/or PVC.

Mr. Obear moved to recommend funding for the Council on Aging’s “Front Entry Replacement” project at a cost of \$30,000, with Mr. Lively seconding. Motion passed 4-0.

- ***Department of Public Works: Discretionary Budget***

This budget allows the DPW flexibility to make emergency repairs and strategic investments in capital equipment each year. This account has been in place for 14 years and when unspent is rolled into the following fiscal year. The ability to roll resources ahead is an advantage of the special article approach to accounting for this expense. The goal is to ensure an ongoing balance of \$100,000 at the start of each year and planned expenses suggest a \$100,000 set aside is needed in FY19.

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Mr. Garrison moved to recommend funding the DPW “Discretionary Account” at a cost of \$100,000, with Mr. Lively seconding. Motion passed 4-0.

- ***Department of Public Works: Town Hall Annex Roof***

This project would replace entire roof system on Town Hall Annex with new underlayment, insulation, and rubber membrane. It would also include removal of unnecessary ventilation and chimney structures, as well as repair damaged soffit and fascia boards. Although the roof is currently leaking, it was believed that this leak would not result in substantial new costs in the future.

The committee had concerns regarding the quality and scope of the quote received for this project. CIC members felt it made more sense to see what happens with the DPW facility building project and learn what the project future of the annex might be before committing to this repair.

Mr. Ellis moved to NOT TO recommend funding for the Department of Public Works “Town Hall Annex Roof” project at a cost of \$85,000, with Mr. Lively seconding. Motion passed 4-0.

- ***Gill-Montague Regional School District: Building Management System Upgrades***

This project would update the network control units and related software for Building Management Systems at the Great Falls Middle School and Turners Falls High School. These are essential to maintenance of HVAC and related systems at the complex. Failure of these controllers would result in building closure. The current units were at the end of their product life cycle when the building was renovated and are no longer made or supported. Although OEM replacements can be found, the building is on borrowed time and support for installation and troubleshooting is limited. This project was the top priority for funding by the GMRSD. Montague will pay for approximately 90% of the total \$80,000 cost with Gill responsible for the remainder.

Mr. Garrison moved to recommend funding for the Gill-Montague Regional School District’s “Building Management System Upgrade” at a cost of \$72,000, with Mr. Ellis seconding. Motion passed 4-0.

- ***Gill-Montague Regional School District: Administrative Building Elevator Study***

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This project would provide an architectural study for an ADA compliant elevator to be added to the GMRSD Administrative Offices at 35 Crocker Ave. While a desirable project, the committee was concerned that the cost quote was not current or appropriately detailed. More significantly, it is believed that undertaking the elevator project would require a host of concurrent ADA improvements that would constitute a major building project. It was the opinion of the committee that such a project should be more closely studied before proceeding with a study of this individual component of the accessibility puzzle.

Mr. Ellis moved to NOT TO recommend funding for the Gill-Montague Regional School District's "Administration Building Elevator Study" at a cost of \$100,000, with Mr. Obear seconding. Motion passed 4-0.

- ***Gill-Montague Regional School District: Replacement of Sheffield and Hillcrest Intercoms***

Though proposed as separate articles, the committee considered these requests concurrently. These projects would replace outdated and in some places non-functioning hard wired intercom systems with new wireless intercoms throughout both buildings. In addition to the value of these projects to effective building-wide communication, the CIC views these as a public safety necessity.

Mr. Garrison moved to recommend funding for the Gill-Montague Regional School District's "Sheffield and Hillcrest InterCom" projects at a cost of \$30,000 and \$25,000, respectively, with Mr. Lively seconding. Motion passed 4-0.

- ***Water Pollution Control Facility: 200 KW Solar Array***

The proposed project, to be funded through sewer borrowing and supported by an expected \$150,000 state grant, would result in the development of a 200 KW solar array on land adjacent to waste water treatment plant. This proposed project would reduce annual energy costs at the WPCF by between \$50,466 and \$85,536. The array would have an expected life of 25-30 years. If financed over 20 years, it would carry an annual cost of approximately \$25,000 per year. The project was estimated based on an engineering study by JK Muir paid for through a state technical assistance grant. It was acknowledged that estimates for solar projects often change as you move from plan to design and construction, but the committee believes it will generate positive revenues in a sustainable manner.

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Mr. Garrison moved to recommend funding for the Water Pollution Control Facility's "Solar Array" at a cost of \$521,000, with Mr. Obear seconding. Motion passed 4-0.

- ***Water Pollution Control Facility: Control Panel and Alarm Repair***

This project would allow for replacement of the control panels and alarms in the Town's aging Denton Street and Montague Center Pump Stations. This would allow the Town to fully implement remote monitoring of pump stations under routine conditions. This will be essential when expected staff reductions take place at the WPCF in FY19.

Mr. Garrison moved to recommend funding for the Water Pollution Control Facility's "Control Panel and Alarm Repair" project at a cost of \$25,000, with Mr. Obear seconding. Motion passed 4-0.

- ***Montague Board of Selectmen/DPW: Repair of Colle Building Windows and Masonry***

This project would use resources available in the Town's Colle Building Reserve Fund (balance = \$346,000) and a possible matching grant from the Massachusetts Historic Preservation Projects fund to make timely repairs to the masonry and windows of the Colle Building, which are subject to historic preservation restrictions. Masonry pointing is in need of improvement on as much as 1/3 of the building on all of its windows are in danger of deterioration that would result in a far higher cost of repair than what is currently being contemplated. The project architect has emphasized that this work will be considerably more expensive if the Town delays.

Several of the building's existing first floor interior storm windows will be replaced through this project with high efficiency compression units. The CIC anticipates working with the Montague Energy Committee on this aspect of the project and expected to consider a long term replacement program focused on improved efficiency of windows throughout the building.

Mr. Lively moved to recommend funding for the "Colle Building Renovation" project at a cost of \$190,000, with Mr. Obear seconding. Motion passed 4-0.